

Vote puts city skateboard parks closer to reality

Council accepts report findings to build eight mini courses, two parks

By Pat Malach
Emerald Associate Editor

If all goes as planned Eugene could have a new outdoor skateboard facility by the end of the summer.

The City Council voted to accept the findings of a Joint Parks Committee report. The report was commissioned to study strategies for giving skateboarders some place to ride other than on city sidewalks and streets.

"We did this in an attempt to encourage responsible use of a sport that will be with us for a while," said councilor Ruth Bascom.

The report calls for a total of ten skateboard facilities to be built. Eight of the parks would be mini street courses to be located near Eugene's middle schools.

Carrie Matsushita, public information coordinator for the Parks and Recreation department said the parks would be targeted to kids ages 10 to 14.

Another structure called for by the report is a larger outdoor facility that could possibly be covered. The tenth structure would be an indoor ramp located in a building that could be secured at night.

Parks and Recreation Director Ernie Drapela said the council has given the parks department permission to proceed with the proposal to install two of the ten facilities. They are currently working on the planning and funding to construct two mini parks, possibly in the Bethel and Amazon Park areas. The projected cost of the mini courses \$5,000 to \$6,000 per facility.

The Parks and Recreation Department will now look for more sites and determine the cost and source of funding for the parks.

Drapela said the plan for the first two experimental "prototype"



File photo

A proposal to build skateboard facilities in Eugene may move the city's skateboarders off the streets and on to eight mini street courses, a larger park or an indoor ramp.

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